**Doom is Inevitable**

**(Marvel x Star Wars Crossover SI)**

**A Galaxy Far, Far Away**

**Outer Rim**

**Eternal Empire of Latveria**

**Latverian System**

**Latveria Prime**

**Imperial Centre**

**Imperial Palace of the Dark Side**

**Year 978 of the Ruusan Era (RE), Day One of the Dark Reign of Emperor Darth Doom**

**Three days after the beginning of the Sinister Clone Wars, six days before the Fantastic Incident, two years before the Naboo Heresy, thirteen years before the Sentinel Wars, twenty-two years before the End of the Republic**

Let’s admit it, readers. When one thinks about the idea of being reincarnated in a universe which also happens to have been described in some movies, you think it is going to be ‘cool’.

After all, you have every reason to be enthusiast.

You are going to have all kind of fun and exciting adventures.

You are going to be a great hero. If it’s not your cup of tea, maybe the anti-hero role is for you, right? There’s also the ‘dastardly villain’ option, of course, engineering countless traps where the forces of Good will fall time after time.

I don’t really blame you. You think you know the plot; you have a good idea of who the major players are, the background information that most protagonists will only understand after years of explanations; and above all, no doubt the powers-that-be which sent you in this universe gave you fantastic abilities to use for good or ill.

Well, it doesn’t work like that.

Or at least, I suppose I should tell it didn’t work like that in my case.

This galaxy is extremely similar, yet different to the one you are familiar with if you watched some movies of Star Wars.

It is certainly due to the fact I am ninety percent certain it is a crossover between the Marvel and the Star Wars settings.

From the point of view of the average citizen in the streets of the Coruscant, it doesn’t make any difference.

From the perspective of a freshly reborn soul, it makes all the difference.

In one click of fingers, all your knowledge is worse than useless. At least if it was useless, you would tell yourself that, and start all over from nothing. But it is not. It is outright misleading, confusing, and nightmarish. And as the years pass, you begin to develop the idea that yes, the Force or whatever omnipotent power arranged your reincarnation is out there, and it enjoys your suffering.

So before properly beginning this story, I suppose I should begin with the basics.

I am no Jedi or Sith. You kind of need Force powers to be considered one or the other, and sadly, at twenty-two years old, I have not seen any sign of indication I have the ability to strangle someone with my mind or convince you that ‘those are not the droids you’re looking for’.

It is an unfair universe. I fought for the cause of liberty during two years. I helped the oppressed population of Kalee hold the line against a monstrous species whose heartfelt desire was to eat warriors and civilians alike.

My reward was to be labelled a terrorist, because yes, the cause of liberty meant nothing when the Great and Mighty Galactic Republic decided to back the other side. You know, the one who had millions of flesh-eater monsters eager to devour every local sentient being of Kalee...and the non-sentient too, I suppose. The invaders were described as ‘omni-carnivorous’, and yes, they earned that qualification many times over. In the end, we would all have ended part of the buffet if not for a ‘Deus Ex Machina’ moment dropping on us at the onset of what was to be the final extermination campaign.

We weren’t the side doing the extermination, in case you had any doubt.

The problem with the ‘Deus Ex Machina’ saving situations, of course, is that everything has a price.

This could be written in gold letters as ‘Rule Two of An Unforgiving Universe’: Everything has a price.

Rule One is ‘Stay as far away from Reed Richards and his infernal experiments as the universe allows you to.”

Or is it ‘the Universe is out to kill you, act in consequence’?

No, I am not joking.

Since this morning began, six different people have tried to kill me by poison.

These are six out of twenty-one different assassination attempts, and I’m not counting the time when a near-naked blonde woman tried to skewer me with a disturbing amount of old-fashioned blades.

“Your Supreme Tenebrous Majesty?”

The title is a mockery, yes, in case you had any doubt.

“Kill him. I have wasted enough time listening to this clone’s rambling. He doesn’t know anything, and we all have better things to do.”

Plasma descends from the ceiling in a colossal blast, and the pale-skinned monster is electrocuted, burned, and receives other excruciating torments.

Then it dies.

Naturally, it smells awful.

It looks horrible.

I wonder how long I will be able to avoid that fate.

“How many?” I ask.

“At this hour, we have found and eliminated five thousand and two hundred of them, your Supreme Tenebrous Majesty.” My minder answers.

“My predecessor should have called him ‘Minister of Clones’, it would have been far more accurate.”

My eyes continue to watch the lifeless husk. Seen from where I stand, the lifeless shell really looks like a vampire, and not the funny kind of bloodsuckers. Everything, from the red eyes to the garish clothes, is disturbing in the extreme.

The only thing that is comforting is that he’s dead. I met both the original and plenty of copies, and it is nauseating to be near them when they’re alive.

Seriously, who is stupid enough to name Nathaniel Essex, aka Mister Sinister, as Head of the Sphere of Biotic Sciences and Director of the Imperial Medical Corps? One glance at the pale-skinned monster was enough to tell you he was going to experiment on everything and everyone! There are plenty of excellent reasons why in the last decades, the Latverian men and women have stopped going to the hospitals and every medical establishment controlled by this psychopath.

And yes, I am aware stupidity didn’t play a role. It’s just that my predecessor wanted the cloning technology Sinister promised him more than he wanted functioning clinics and hospitals.

It’s kind of ironic because in the end, Sinister killed most of *his* clones.

Or it would have been, if now we all didn’t have to deal with purging and massacring thousands of Sinister clones. Honestly, I knew the Clone Wars were going to be a thing, but I didn’t know it was going to be like that...and so soon.

“The Dark Council is respectfully requesting your presence, your Supreme Tenebrous Majesty.” My minder clears her throat before speaking, visibly uncomfortable.

We both know this is not a request, and there is not a single touch of respect in the souls of these psychopaths and powerhungry monsters.

A proper Sith would storm his way towards them and use fantastic Force-user powers to make them kneel and grovel.

I am not a Sith, and I don’t have the alternative some other tyrants would have at their disposal.

The Council didn’t want a Sith to be in command. They wanted a puppet. And after two years fighting in the jungles of Kalee, I was their best option for a sane and desperate claimant.

“Then let’s not make the Council wait.” Obviously, I do my best to remove any trace of weakness from my voice.

You would do too if the alternative is another assassination attempt before the next fifteen minutes are over.

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The atmosphere in the throne room is extremely oppressive.

Some of it unquestionably has to do with all the red and black colours.

There are no windows, and every light is illuminating the immense space with some shade of crimson light.

The architecture present is properly abominable. It looks like someone went for a variant Gothic style first, then decided it clearly wasn’t ‘evil-looking’ enough.

As a consequence, they added skulls, mosaics representing tortured bodies, and painted scenes where humans and non-humans succumbed to the worst impulses beings can resort to.

Here and there the triumphs of past Latverian Emperors are shining in malevolent light. They are standing atop mountains of corpses, raping vanquished enemies, and other abominable crimes I won’t comment at length.

The intention, I suppose, was that it should look ‘most evil’.

Knowing what I know about Latveria, the very effort is pathetic.

Seriously, did they wonder why the rest of the galaxy thought they were a joke?

“I see you haven’t yet managed to remove the throne, General.” I comment as I take my seat, which, miracles of miracles, is not trapped this time, and is sinfully comfortable.

And there is not even a venomous animal or killer droid waiting to strike under the table.

“One is trying, your Supreme Tenebrous Majesty, but the security measures left by your Holy Predecessor are...quite lethal.”

Translation: many minions have lost their lives.

Or it could be something else, and the Dark Councillor is waiting to see if I will be stupid enough to sit on the throne one day, knowing perfectly that it will kill me.

If so, he will have to drag me in chains to it, because after seeing what it did to that Sinister clone who got liquefied by the super-acid, I am NOT getting within a hundred metres of it.

Yeah, there is a reason why that throne room is absurdly huge, and yet the round table is at the opposite end of it.

“Indeed.” I watch the rest of the monsters assembled.

They are all there. Out of nine seats, thrones, and various accommodations, seven are occupied around the black round table, which has been carved to represent the genocide of some species I don’t recognise.

The eighth was Sinister’s, and given how busy all the Latverian forces are busy purging his clones, his absence is easily explained. As for the ninth...I believe the incumbent is dead, but the Dark Councillors have assured me it is not the case. Perhaps they are wildly optimistic. Perhaps they are not, since after there was no body to bury, and knowing the classic trope, I am not going to waste my saliva on the subject.

I do not trust them.

Then again, trust was never part of the bargain.

And you can tell easily, despite not knowing them, that the members of the Dark Council don’t trust each other.

They are the beings Darth Sidious used to enforce his rule of terror over Latveria.

Yes, *that* Darth Sidious.

The megalomaniac psychopath who had the wet dream of conquering the galaxy and drink all the terror juice he could from his slaughterhouses.

In one universe, he achieved some of his ambitions.

In this galaxy, fortunately for most people, he was born in the Latverian System.

And now he is very, very dead.

That’s what happens when you screw up the ritual supposed to transform you into a ‘Dark God’.

He is dead, and yet his legacy lives.

The galaxy was mostly spared from enduring Sidious’ atrocities.

Latveria wasn’t so lucky.

And his advisors remain. Minus one now, with Sinister hunted everywhere in the Latverian System.

These are very old predators, and I feel really, really alone.

But once again, showing weakness is not an option.

I speak the traditional words, and the meeting officially begins.

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The first of the Councillors to speak is certainly one of the most dangerous.

When some tyrants say the death of one being is a tragedy, the death of millions a statistic? Yes, you could certainly show them the icy figure of that monster.

Red-eyed, blue-skinned, dressed in austere black uniform which screams ‘threat’ to anyone having a brain cell or two.

This is General Aleksander Lukin, a Chiss who also happens to be the Head of the Spheres of Intelligence and Internal Affairs. In blunt terms, the translation is that he controls the Secret Police of the Latverian regime.

“We have found over five thousand six hundred and seventy-eight clones of Sinister at this hour.” The cold and unpleasant near-human explains like he did that kind of purge every day. “Fifty-three labs have been found, and the presence of clones inside the capital has been almost extinguished. We are increasing our efforts all across Latveria. I swear, your Supreme Tenebrous Majesty, that in one hundred hours, this ridiculous ‘Sinister Clone War’ will be over.”

“I’m glad to hear it, General, and-“

Someone laughs.

Unavoidably, all the heads around the table turn towards the voice owner.

The man is the exact opposite of Lukin, it must be said.

Where the uniform of the Chiss is simple but terrifying by the symbol it represents, his is red and black...at least where there is still space to look at. This is what happens when most of your military parade clothes are covered in military decorations.

Aside from that, General Herman von Strucker looks like a brute, with arms larger and more muscled than my legs, a bare skull covered in scars, and a nasty green bionic eye.

“You screwed up Lukin,” the descendant of the war criminal Wolfgang von Strucker laughed. “If you had some human decency under your blue skin, you would offer your life to the Darth here and now. You failed!”

There is no word said, but given the expression the Head of Intelligence gives the General in charge of the Imperial Army and the Sphere of Military Strategy, I have no doubt that if looks could kill, Herman von Strucker would be dead right now.

“Oh yes, the glorious Conqueror of Endor speaks of failure.” Lukin didn’t sneer, but I suppose figures of granite would have felt more reassuring than him. “Where was this assurance when you came back and had to admit to Sidious your army was routed again by the Ewoks?”

What?

“Oh come on, we are not-“

But the provocation works.

“THERE WAS TREACHERY!” Von Strucker snarls, out of control, as saliva is expelled out of his mouth and spreads everywhere. “I HAD EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL!”

“The Ewoks still won.” Lukin replies, and for once there is the shadow of a smirk visible on the Chiss’ face. “You managed to lose against a primitive species of furry bipeds that has yet to admit their world isn’t flat and-“

“I WAS OBEYING ORDERS!” With great difficulty, Von Strucker manages to control himself. “SIDIOUS INSISTED TO TAKE COMMAND AND IMPOSE HIS STRATEGY!”

“Wait a minute,” I intervene, “the Imperial Army really lost several Brigades in an ill-conceived invasion of the Endor System a decade ago without any Jedi-led intervention? The Republican propaganda didn’t lie about it?”

“No,” Lukin reacts in the name of the Dark Council, and for some seconds, I sigh in relief. It doesn’t last long. “There wasn’t one invasion, there were three. And each one ended in a bigger disaster than the previous one.”

What?

“But...” How is it possible to screw up on such an epic scale? “How is it possible to lose that badly when you have conventional starships armed to the teeth and your enemy has yet to build a proper civilisation, never mind reach the stars?”

“The Admiral in charge was chosen for his loyalty, not his competence,” Von Strucker grits his teeth. “And there was a little hyperspace translation error-“

“The third fleet rammed the gas giant of Endor at maximal speed,” Lukin translates, and if there were weapons in the room, I’m sure many would have already been drawn.

“Always eager to point out the flaws of everyone else, Lukin,” Herman von Strucker growls, “why don’t you tell our new Supreme Majesty how you brainwashed your elite operatives into sex workers, because Sidious wanted beauties to fill up his harem?”

What?

Okay, this one at least explains some disturbing things.

“I suppose,” I try to keep my voice conversational, “that this might be the reason why I was greeted with blades and other charming reception committees every time I opened a wrong door during my touristic tour of the Palace?”

The Chiss looks...annoyed. Whether it is because his agents acted against his orders or due to the failures of the assassination attempts upon my humble person, I don’t know, and it might not be prudent to voice the question.

“Well,” I continue, “at least the invasions of Endor have stopped. There are no more Imperial troops in this system, right?”

A lot of internal alarms flash in my head when the majority of the Dark Council members are turning their head towards the Head of the Sphere of Technology.

“I obeyed orders!” Otto Octavius declares. With the four gigantic metallic snakes tied to his body, I am really not going to provoke him.

“You destroyed the wrong system.” Von Strucker gloats, and the medals on his chest are creating a melody as he moves.

What?

“After the last invasion of Endor, his defunct Supreme Tenebrous Majesty ordered a super-weapon which would eradicate the threat of the primitive furry biped threat forever!” The mad scientist says defensively. “However, the tests were rushed, and as a result the Galactic Gun had a slight aiming problem-“

“And you destroyed the wrong system,” the Councillor next to him, and one which looks like a cyborg which has a TV replacing the ‘head’ adds sardonically. This is Doctor Zola, Head of the Sphere of Production and Logistics. “It wouldn’t have happened if there were droids involved in its construction.”

“Last time we followed your guidelines,” Octavius retorts hotly, “the main weapon of the Xyston Star Destroyer prototype fried every personnel we had onboard!”

“I obeyed the commands of Darth Sidious!”

This is really, really becoming a common theme.

If I didn’t already know the circumstances of my predecessor’s death, I would have guessed one of the Councillors would have assassinated the Emperor to cover up a few bloody fiascos.

There is an unpleasant sound, and I realise that this is the laughter of the Minister of Propaganda, Head of the Sphere of Information and Education.

Unlike all the others around the table, he is not seated on anything looking like a chair.

This is because he is not human, near-human, or even had a human body at that point.

Mojo the Hutt is an enormous slug, and though he doesn’t stink like most of the members of his species, the gleam in his snake-like eyes is no comfort.

“This Council Session opening the reign of our New Darth is going to make a splendid holo-movie!” The huge yellow slug-like being declares.

“Don’t you dare,” and suddenly, Grand Vizier Sate Pestage doesn’t look like a weak old man wearing a colossal turban, but like a vicious and cruel backstabber. I am pretty sure there is a Blaster hidden in his long purple sleeves too. “Your so-called ‘audience boosting’ is costing Latveria thousands of lives every year, and the last time you threw one of your fellow Hutts into your murderous arena, the Cartels were almost ready to declare war!”

“I was simply giving the masses what they asked for!” The Hutt protested in a tone that reeked of insincerity.

“Everyone knows your actors die before the end of the holo-movie,” the last Councillor is fat, massive, and bald. His hands are also covered in wounds, the kind the ‘Head of the Sphere of Trade’ shouldn’t have. But Wilson Fisk doesn’t sound like much the idea any Republican soul would have of a trade representative. “You even kill the actors of your porn movies at the end, the Dark Side only knows why.”

A couple of seconds later, I am now the focus of the merciless black eyes.

“And of course, there is the latest problem, your Majesty.”

Immediately, Wilson Fisk rises in my esteem, just by shortening the ridiculous mockery that is the imperial form of address.

“This is related to the fact that the Arch-Priestess of the Dark Side is missing, courtesy of officiating the ritual Dark Sidious was convinced it would grant him ‘dark apotheosis’?” I politely ask.

“No,” Fisk shakes his enormous head. “The Black Queen Selene Gallio will return when she will return. I don’t expect it to take it too long now, honestly. She has been here to have sex with each Emperor for the last centuries.”

“Excuse me?”

“This is part of the ritual which triggers the latent powers of any claimant Emperor,” Mojo the Hutt informs me courteously, clearly enjoying my surprise. “If it works, you are officially the new Eternal Emperor of the Reborn Sith Empire, Glory to Latveria, Dark Light of the Firmament and all of that.”

The Hutt pauses for a few seconds, then strikes.

“If the ritual doesn’t work, of course, Gallio eats the heart of the unworthy claimant.”

Of course. Of course, why should have I expected anything else from this empire of evil, mayhem, and absolute stupidity?

I am going to have to find a way to not participate in this ‘ritual’, obviously. I have a feeling this bloody tradition’ is one of the reasons each Emperor of Latveria is a crazy megalomaniac. Power corrupts absolutely, but the levels of ‘evilness’ are so constant there has to be something that triggers this folly, right?

Right?

“Fine.” There is nothing I can do that here and now, of course. The Dark Imperial Pyramid is quarantined as we speak, and as much as the idea of annihilating it from orbit sounds fine, I am pretty sure neither Von Strucker nor the other members are going to obey my commands if I shout them to remove it from this plane of existence. “The clarification was...informative. Minister Fisk. Since these were clearly not the news you referred to as a problem,” though in mind, it is definitely a big one, “what were you referring to?”

The massive ‘Minister of Trade’ – if it involves smuggling, drug smuggling, and other illicit activities, I will be absolutely unsurprised – doesn’t smile, but I don’t like at all his expression.

“Your excellent Minister of Propaganda,” and suddenly, it is interesting to watch a Hutt try to deflate his enormous slug size and appear innocent, “kidnapped the famous weapon businessman Tony Stark.”

“Of Stark Industries, the megacorp who effectively owns Balmorra in all but name?” The feeling of dread intensifies when Fisk nods back.

“This very weapon-maker, yes-“

“He was taken captive by some liberty fighters I am in reasonably good terms with!” Mojo the Hutt exclaims with disturbing joy. “It was a golden opportunity I couldn’t miss!”

Oh yes, I was completely right to have this sort of dreadful vibes.

I clear my throat.

“A golden opportunity for what?” I wonder out loud, and by their expressions, the six other Dark Councillors dread the worst like I do.

“Well for him to be the star of my latest holo-movie, of course!” For all that plenty of my memories of my first life have faded in a previous life, I remember a woman wearing nothing but a bikini slowly strangling an enormous Hutt with slave chains.

Here and now, I am very tempted to replicate the exploit.

“The casting was excellent, and the star himself survived! The galactic ratings of *Lord of War* are excellent, I assure you, your Supreme Tenebrous Majesty!”

“You...” even Lukin seems to be taken aback by this sheer stupidity. Maybe he missed that problem because in the last hours, he was busy hunting all the copies of Sinister? “You kidnapped one of the most well-known figures of the Republican military-industrial-political complex, and you forced him to participate in one of your murder-movies? And then you broadcast it to the entire galaxy?”

The Chiss didn’t scream ‘are you insane?’ but everything on his face and in his red eyes was relaying that message.

“Yes?” The huge slug was unrepentant, of course. “It isn’t like the Republic has the logistics or the naval forces to threaten us-“

“We’re still cleaning the mess of two centuries ago!” Von Strucker raged. “You know what it means? The Jedi and the other stupid paragons of justice that always follow in their tracks will come here!”

As the argument spiral out of control, and the Dark Councillors are on the edge of killing each other, I suddenly wonder if it wouldn’t have been easier to die in the jungles of Kalee.

At least during that war, I was pretty sure I was the good guy, no matter what nonsense the Republic tried to sprout to its narrow-minded citizens.

But...okay, what is done is done.

And I suppose we haven’t done the presentations yet.

For the better part of twenty-one years, I was Victor Fatalis, prodigy in engineering, droid technology, and other advanced fields.

Now I am Victor von Doom, Emperor of Latveria, and I also happen to be the new Darth, aka the Dark Emperor of the Sith.

My Dark Council is filled with brilliant monsters who think testing me can only be done by assassination attempts. The treasury is near-empty, and my Minister of Biotic Science launched his coup the moment I set a foot on Latveria. The Galactic Republic thinks we are a dark joke that isn’t worth crushing, though I have a feeling their calculus is beginning to change in that regard.

And to be honest, they are right.

We are a joke, except when it’s your reality, you don’t like the black humour at all.

I am Darth Doom, and I’m beginning to think all those TV tropes about Bond villains and other bad guys brought a lot of good points, in the end.

I was told this reigning name would strike fear in the hearts of my enemies.

I was told that Doom is inevitable.

I’m beginning to think it is my downfall they were speaking about.

It is Day One of my ‘Dark Reign’.

At the pace the disasters arrive, I know I am not going to survive six days, never mind one year.

What did I do to deserve this?